1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

in to Lower Post. Each of these groups maintains its residence on one of the three Indian reserves adjoining Lower Post (Fig. 7). On the south bank of the Liard River are the camps of most of the Dease River, Nelson River, and Sekani people; on the north bank, east of the trading stores are other Nelson Indians and two Tahltan families, while west of the trading center and church, the land is reserved for Liard Indians. Such local divisions is traditional but not compulsory. Members of all these tribes occasionally shift their camps to reserves predominantly occupied by tribal neighbors. The growing custom of erecting permanent summer houses, however, will curtail this practice. Although discouraged from doing so by the policeman and Indian Agent, Indians occasionally camp off the reserves in proximity to the camps or houses of white trappers.

The community as a whole is split into two ethnic divisions, Indian and white. Visiting, intermarriage, and social functions tend to be somewhat restricted between these subdivisions but there are many exceptions to this statement. Dances and gambling games organized by Indians are often participated in by white trappers. Where marriage between an Indian woman and a white man occurs, each normally maintains most intensive social interaction with his own ethnic group. Separate winter accommodations, or bunkhouses, for Indians and whites are maintained by the two largest trading companies; one independent trader, however, does not at all attempt such segregation.

The Indians do not take an interest in improving conditions in the community or on their reserves. Such improvement was once observed in 1944 when a government bulldozer was employed by some white men to level off their properties in Lower Post. Inspired by this scene, River Joe engaged the operator for the task of constructing an automobile road to the end of the Upper Liard River Indian reserve. He proposed to pay for the work out of contributions secured from other Indians but ended by paying the major share of the costs himself. Since the road now opened the reserve to visits by the policeman's car, he and other Indians soon regretted his enthusiasm.

Social Stratification

Kaska society is both casteless and classless. While superficial differences of social behavior obtain between families—for example, in the type of houses built, the number of dwellings owned, or the annual income received—any operational significance of such differences is completely absent. If we regard classes as abstractions based on habits of groups in a society,[9] or if we regard class differentials as based on associated interest differences,[10] we must conclude that the Kaska cannot be divided along class lines.

The members of the community emphasize few status differences apart from those associated with age and sex. Political status is ascribed from outside the Indian society and will be discussed below. Ethnic stratification is unemphasized. Younger males are sometimes referred to for a few idiosyncratic traits of behavior, but are not distinguished from the rest of the society in terms of life goals or interests and are not subjected to any differential forms of behavior originating from other members of the society.

[9] Dollard, John, Seminar on Social Structure and Individual Orientation. Yale University, 1940.
[10] Kardiner, The Psychological Frontiers of Society (1945), 241–246.

They were circular in shape and resembled buttons, rings, apparently cut out in a single piece from some kind of fine bone or ivory. The small ends sprung apart and were inserted in the septum of the nose. It is unknown whether these bone nose ornaments were made by the Tahltan or procured from other tribes. In later times silver nose rings were used. These were procured from the Tlingit, who also used them. Bone and silver nose rings were used by both sexes but chiefly by women. Nose ornaments of the forms in vogue among the plateau tribes were not used. Almost all were of haliotis shells procured from the coast. Boys and men wore from one to three shells in each ear, many girls and women had four. Poor people bored their children's ears when they were infants, often only two or three days after birth. The nose was bored at the same time. Wealthy people had their children's ears bored at intervals of two or more years. The first holes, one in each ear, were bored when the child was three or four years old, about two or more years afterwards the second holes were bored, and after similar intervals the third and fourth. A daughter of wealthy parents got her fourth ear rings when about ten or twelve years old. Each time her ears were pierced her father or parents gave a feast and numerous presents to the people. They also gave a feast and presents when her nose was bored. Only people of high rank or possessors of much wealth did this. It seems if the father of the girl was a Raven, he gave the presents only to members of his own phratry, and vice versa if a Wolf.

Boring of the ears and nose was done with an awl or with a needle and a quill or a sinew thread inserted immediately afterwards. Earrings were not put in until the wound had healed. Sometimes holes were made with a porcupine quill which was pulled partly through and left there, the sharp end being clipped off or tied up. Labrets were not used by the Tahltan, but only by wealthy people of the Tlingit and Taku. Some of these people gave a feast and killed one or two slaves at the time when their daughters' lip was pierced. It was believed that wearing of labrets prevented early wrinkling of the face.

Bracelets were used long ago. These were of leather and ornamented with quill embroidery. Later they were replaced by metal bracelets (silver, copper and brass, etc.) procured from the Tlingit. Some of these had incised totemic designs on them, some were flat and others round. Some wealthy women were as many as six of these on each arm. Ho horn and wooden bracelets were used. Finger rings came into use in late

times. They were of metal (silver, etc.,) and procured at first from the Tlingit.

Hair Dress

Most men cut their hair square across about level with the shoulders. Some cut their hair a little higher, others a little lower. A few wore it full length. If the hair was very long it was tied with a single string at the back of the neck. Men never braided their hair. Almost all people of both sexes cut their hair a little in front square across above the eyes. Young women especially wore their hair in a single braid full length down the back. Older women generally wore their hair in two braids with the ends turned. Some boys and many girls wore their hair loose and hanging down the back or confined in curls with a string tied around at the back of the neck. (Fashions of pubescent girls, pubescent girls and mourners, etc., are mentioned elsewhere). Young children had their hair full length or almost so behind and cut across above the eyes in front. Most men and women parted their hair in the middle, but a few men parted theirs on one side. Many of both sexes painted the parting of their hair red. The hair was never painted and the only kind of grease or oil used on the hair was bear's grease.

According to tradition, combs were scarce very long ago but more plentiful later. They were made of wood, bone and antler. Most of them were somewhat square in shape and had only a few teeth, some not more than four. Those made of caribou antler had the most teeth and were probably the best combs. Informants say a common type of comb was like those of the Chilkoots. No fine-tooth combs like those of the Siletzes or Tsimshians were used. The hair was never combed, shaved, clipped or burned off. Hair was cut by putting the head down on a small smooth board resting on something solid. The hair was combed and spread out evenly on it and then cut across with a sharp knife of shell or stone, etc., in the hands of another person.

Hair cut off was generally burned. If the hair of a young woman of high class was very long, it was sometimes kept by her people and used to make substitutes at dances, etc., as a kind of wig. Usually the hair was sewed to the lower edge of a head band and hung down full length all around. There was no custom

or bad between gukeeners.

Girls when married at once took off their ambleren, collars and other ornaments they were with more ambleerie of matehood.

They also changed their style of hair dress and henceforth wore their hair so women did in a single braid which hung full length down the back. After marriage they either painted their faces always for dances. There were no marriage dances nor marriages by touching as among the Dalian tribes. Marriages were those marriages by elopement not by force of strength, etc., such as wrestling as it used to have been the case in some tribes in the North (Bantian, for instance).

Sometimes a lad was purported of sleeping with a girl and was found out. The girl's mother then asked her daughter the truth of the matter. She would acknowledge that she had been not given reasons as owing to her love for the lad or man. The mother then went to the lad's father and told him. If the two families were of about equal rank a marriage was then generally easily arranged. If however the lad's father was very wealthy or of high rank and the girl belonged to a very poor or low family there was often difficulty and much bad feeling. Perhaps the lad's father did not wish his son to marry into such a family. If the lad was in love with the girl he sometimes managed after a

[illegible] type to get the father to consent. The marriage was then consummated in the usual way. Even the girl was electrocuted into the family by marriage she or once was considered as high and equal with them, and also native of a poor boy once married a girl of a wealthy or high family. If the father would not consent to the said marriage and perhaps the man used as persuasion to the extent, then he had to settle the trouble by paying a lot of goods to the girl's parents. After the payment was made then he would have given her to have regular marriage ceremony.

(28) Marriages were sometimes arranged for very young children. The families will discussed between them and betroth young children of whom which age or ground between themselves that when these children grow up they should marry each other. This was sometimes carried out. No promise was given until the marriage actually took place. Sometimes, however, the two children that grow up did not like each other, so which case the agreement between the parents was allowed to lapse. Nothing of course but took them to make the agreement binding. Occasionally the parents of a very young girl or girl under age offered to pre-claimed their daughter when of age to some wealthy man or one who was much liked or esteemed. Generally when the girl came of age she became the wife of this man or the ordinary

commercial way, even if he was very much older than she was. [illegible] people who were of high rank through wealth always tried to have their children [illegible] among their class. Sometimes [illegible] girls of this class followed their hearts and against their class interests married persons who were poor and of low rank. This, however, was exceptional, as it was the way to go against the wishes of their parents and relatives, and, as it were, lose their case. This is why almost all broken down people are about equal to each other according to wealth and the old aristocracy of wealth obtains no longer. If a husband habitually ill-treated his wife her father could take her back by paying him for his loss. This may about equal to or a little over the value of the marriage presents received for the daughter and the gifts the husband other marriage had given to him.

Polygamy was practised, but many for was had more than one wife, a few had ten. This practice had also died out. No women had more than one husband.

If a man's wife died her nearest sister was supposed to become his next wife. If for some reason he did not marry, the children if young were taken by the deceased wife's relatives to be reared by them.

As a custom succeeded the uncle had inherited the property he also was expected to marry or at least [illegible]

G. Steingraeber B-3 (1943-1945);1994 MD12 Nakano MD12

Upper Liard
Dease River

[illegible] moieties referred to in every day usage of the Indians as the Yahos, Poly, Yadis Loin, and Spun Loin, for the Wolves like do not.

Exogamous moieties regulate marriage. Members of one division also prepared the opposite group's dead for burial. The sides rendered particulars to one another. On such occasions the members of each group adorned their faces with a particular colored paint, blue for the Crowhead and for the Wolves. The designs, however, did not differ. When a large number of people assisted together each moiety "vaulted" wood for the fire, standing poles in a step heap. Then they would slide the fuel into the fire, each side in succession rolling or pitching after the other. Afterwards the brethren in law (i.e., the men belonging to opposite moieties) sat around and talked. The practice of fire vaulting may be regarded as a ritual rite of intensification," serving to promote intercourse between the opposites on close to assimilate to the solidarity of the larger ag groups.

[illegible] these social levels were designated in the pre-contact Kaska community, the rich, poor, and slaves. Social distinction on the basis of wealth is a prominent feature in the culture of the Pacific Drainage Athapaskans and is even more extensively developed among the Indians of a Northwest Coast. One informant (G) knew about an hereditary nobility among the Tagish but stated flatly that the system of social stratification found there had no counterpart in the Caribou. Such a statement is not unexpected in terms of the restrictions he participated between class structure and surplus-wealth production.

A rich man, namely, the successful valley is used to designate the Supreme Being), could not among his fellows because he could support four or five wives, more than children, acquired more possessions and employed considered servants. His most received many ornaments. "People encouraged to a rich man." Wealth derived from skillful hunting and trapping. The poor man, [illegible], lived with a single wife and often found it difficult to provide venison for and their children. Poorer children distinguished the poor man and to convey after his meal carried little weight. Ideally, marital relations existed between the rich and poor. If a rich man spoke harshly to his less fortunate poor the former's supernatural patronage] deserted him and all his ability to kill game would be withheld. Under such circumstances helping a poor man would make him to recoup his luck. Poor men who [illegible] from wealthier people repaid such help by assisting the host persons, for example, visiting the latters' dwellings. In this way the rich came to enjoy the labor of paupers. A slave, alive (this is said to be a Tlingit word adopted into the Upper Liard vocabulary), represented a very significant. Inasmuch as the Kaska gathered rather many rich neighbors, slaves were usually women. A man sometimes relegated to his or his slave children as slaves."

[illegible] Upper Liard, in late 1940 Father Allard, an Oblate missionary stationed at Telegraph Creek, wrote, "All members of the tribe are free to leave and link over all the tribal territory. They live in bands of one, two or three families,—each family consisting of father-mother and children, with sometimes other members,

[illegible]

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12
Dease River

married or single.[6] Such a description represents the aboriginal pattern of Dease River social organization. Each band recognized a "chief,"[7] or leader, who guided the people in hunting. Outstanding in his ability to secure game, a headman was also always a rich man. Sometimes as many as seven families comprised his following. As a headman aged and became incapacitated, he relinquished his rule in favor of a son or brother whose duties included caring for the retired leader.

All the Dease River Indians were divided into two moieties, called ("wolves"), the Wolf and Crow. The two sections represented exogamous units in which membership followed the matrilineal line. Prohibition prevented intermarriage between the divisions, the members of which also prepared each other's dead for burial and conducted in mourning.[8]

Rich and poor men resided in exact on in the pre-contact community. The former represented able hunters who managed to secure large quantities of meat and skin. Such abundance attracted followers and dependents who accepted their patron's authority. These rich men also held positions of band leadership. The poor depended on the wealthy for food and skin. They made no return for such assistance. Sometimes a man became temporarily impoverished as a result of being his hunting "luck." Help to such a man was advantageous because he would certainly remember the generosity when his fortunes turned. Poverty, as long as it did not come from laziness, provided no bar to marriage, but a lazy man merited only laughter and jeers.[9]

[6] Albert, Fort on the Fraser and Upper Lower Indians (1938), 36-40.

[7] When the Hudson's Bay Company entered the Caribou, they appointed head chiefs to develop trapping. The word is derived from this period. The "company chief" was provided with a certain number of goods and received fees and rebates to distribute to his "boys." Upon the Indians' arrival at the post the manager first a gun to whom the executive. Prior to this period, information agreed, no comparable leader existed among the Dease River people.

[8] Teit reports a more complex social system for the adjoining Tahltan. "Their social organization appears to be based largely on four divisions among the Thagit. Like the latter, they are divided into two exogamous phratries called Wolf and Crow (or to the men of the Crow, the former is more important and is said to represent the original Tahltan people). Children belong to the phratry and clan of their mother. Each phratry consists of three clans or gentes, each of which has a hereditary chief and a territory of its own. These six chiefs form the governing body of the tribe. The clans do not have special totems, nor traditions deriving their origin from mythological ancestors. Crows and wolves usually belong to the phratry. A person thus enters at the present day, having originated about 100 years ago through intermarriage of and intermarriage with the Thagit. A belongs to the Wolf phratry, but has an exceptional territory not held within the country of the Tahltans. It is called by the Thagit name. There is no inheritance of rank and wealth, but these confer here as elsewhere certain rights in hunting grounds, fisheries, etc. Methods of obtaining rank, the potlatch, and many of the social and ceremonial customs of the tribe are closely adopted from the Thagit." (Teit, The Tahltan (unpublished) Ms. [1914], also 485. See also Jenness, Indians of Canada [1932], 371; Rev. William Bruce, of Vancouver and Telegraph Creek, B. C., loaned the present writer several photographs of a Tahltan potlatch held in relatively recent times. These showed men wearing dark cloth robes embroidered with white appliqué in the usual Tahltan and Tsimshian designs and many feather in the robes also characteristic for the Northwest Coast.

In Lower Post we learned of only two exogamous moieties among the Tahltan, the Wolf and Crow. Teit's description of clans with territorial rights does not sound convincing and also refer to land divisions in the Tahltan system.

[9] Slaves were reported for the Tahltan there are "rich," Nahanis, a will to have held 10 captive victims. These looked and talked the their master and were well treated. (Personal communication from